

A POCKET MEDICAL DICTIONARY. Compiled by Lois Oakes, S.R.N., D.N., assisted by Thomas B. Davie, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. Fifth Edition. 1941. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone. 3s. 6d. net.

IN addition to an illustrated dictionary, this small volume contains useful appendices on First Aid, Gas Warfare, Poisons, Urine Testing, Dietary Tables, etc.

It is surprising to find in a fifth edition such typographical errors as assimilation (p. 31), per anus (p. 254), quinsey (p. 278), analine (p. 312). Of about thirty words taken at random the following were not found in the dictionary:—achalasia, aneurin, digoxin, granulocyte, narcolepsy, schizophrenia, thrombocyte. "Sulphapyridine" and "sulphathiazole" are included, but not in their proper alphabetical position.

Many of the definitions given require revision; for example, we are told that amyloid disease is a fatty disease, that œstrin is "a proprietary preparation of the œstrus-producing hormone of the placenta," that percaïne is "employed for regional infiltration and spinal anæsthesia in the form of an ointment, Percainal."

In the Tables of Weights and Measures it should be made clear that in the Imperial System there are $437\frac{1}{2}$ grains in one ounce.

On p. 256 we are told that the treatment of Pernicious Anæmia consists of "rest in bed, arsenic, blood transfusion in severe cases, and the Minot-Murphy (liver) diet," but no mention is made of injections of liver extract. If therapeutic suggestions are given, they should be up-to-date, even in a Pocket Dictionary.

In spite of such imperfections, this dictionary would appear to be in much demand, as the fifth edition has appeared just over eight years after the first edition.

TEXTBOOK OF MEDICAL TREATMENT. By various authors. Edited by D. M. Dunlop, M.D., F.R.C.P.Ed.; L. S. P. Davidson, M.D., F.R.C.P.Ed.; and J. D. McNee, D.Sc., M.D., F.R.C.P. Foreword by the late A. J. Clarke, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.S. Pp. 1179. 25s. net. 1942. Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone.

THE first edition of this excellent textbook and a "reprint" were reviewed in this Journal in October, 1939, and April, 1940. We now welcome the appearance of the second edition, in which some mistakes have been corrected, the general text has undergone much revision, and, in particular, the articles on septicæmia, cerebrospinal fever, gonorrhœa, pneumonia, etc., have been brought up to date by the inclusion of the more recent work on the sulphonamides.

To quote from the Foreword:—"The volume provides a basis for the rational and critical judgment of modern therapeutic agents. A complete break has been made from the use of drugs as talismans of doubtful efficacy, which serve chiefly as placebos to physician and patient by convincing both that treatment is being given and received. Attention is centred on drugs which produce a recognizable effect, and the nature of the desired effect is clearly indicated."

Unfortunately, war-time prescribing is not considered; it will therefore be found that drugs are often recommended, the ordering of which could not be justified under war conditions. Thus tinctures could often be replaced by liquid extracts, and, as a rule, alternatives could be found for olive oil, liquid paraffin, etc. Better uses could be found at present for bismuth than to include it in stomach mixtures and powders. Further, it is respectfully suggested that proprietary names for B.P. drugs such as phenobarbitone, carbachol, phemitone, nikethamide, etc., should not be used, although they might be indicated in brackets.

We cordially recommend this textbook to practitioners and senior students, but suggest that the National War Formulary recently issued by the Ministry of Health should—at least whilst the war lasts—be consulted for guidance in war-time prescribing.